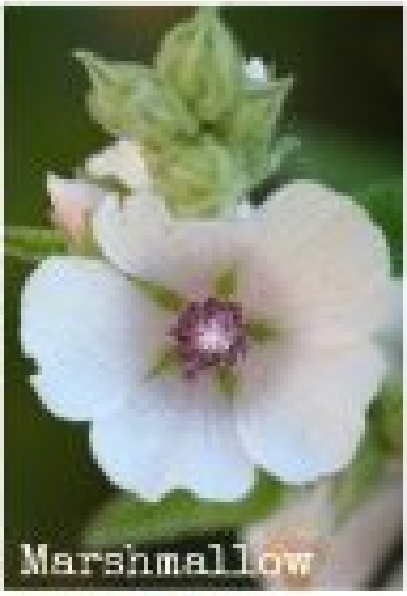
NATURAL REMEDIES FOR THE FALL

Preparing for Cold & Flu Season



Elaine Sheff

Natural Remedies For The Fall : Preparing for Cold & Flu Season

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Dedication

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To my husband, John, who has been there through the thick and thin of it. He has endured more than any father should have to and he keeps coming through. It is my profound honor to be his partner on this journey. Thank you, John, for your love, support and tenacity. May the road continue to get a little less bumpy and a little more green.

Natural Remedies For Fall

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Introduction

Fall approaches and the days grow shorter. It is the season of harvest. School begins and we start to feel that familiar nip in the air. Fall is the time to start preparing our immune system for the cold and flu season.

Making the effort to build and strengthen the body is best done with a many-faceted approach. Choosing healthy lifestyle options will always optimize one's health and reduce the risk of illness. Basic things to consider are getting enough rest, drinking plenty of water, getting regular exercise, having some fun and eating healthy, whole foods.

How to use this book:
The first section of this book contains information about herbs, nutrients and essential oils. The recipes in the second half of the book are designed to help you use the ingredients mentioned in the first section. Botanical names are listed when appropriate to help make sure you find the right herb or essent[ial oil.

Warming Herbs

Feeling a little chilly? I love the idea of using warming herbs as the fall season approaches. Shifting the herbs we use to match the seasons helps the body adapt to environmental changes and helps us stay connected to the rhythms of nature. Using the following herbs will help increase circulation, aid digestion, and warm the body. These herbs are wonderful to add to soups, and even to hot baths. Try incorporating them into hot teas, baked goods, salad dressings and sauces. You can also mix them with an herbal honey, as honey (and vinegar) are considered warming foods.

Warming herbs include:

- Anise (*Pimpinella anisum*)
- Basil (*Ocimum basilicum*)
- Cayenne (*Capsicum spp*.)
- Cumin (*Cuminum cyminum*)
- Chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*)
- Cinnamon (*Cinnamomum spp*.)
- Cloves (*Syzygium aromaticum*)
- Coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*)
- Dill (Anethum graveolens)
- Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*)
- Garlic (*Allium sativum*)
- Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) (fresh or dried)
- Horseradish (*Armoracia rusticana*)
- Mustard (*Brassica spp*.)
- Nasturtium (*Tropaeolum majus*)
- Parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*)
- Prickly Ash (*Zanthoxylum americanum*)
- Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)
- Star anise (*Illicium verum*)
- Thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*)
- Watercress (*Nasturtium officinale*)

Chives
Mustard
Ginger
Fennel

Supporting The Immune System

Throughout the darker months of the year, we are often more challenged to stay well. General immune-strengthening herbs and nutrients can be used over long periods to strengthen and build the immune system. If you tend to get sick easily, are under lots of stress, or if you are recovering from an illness or long-term ailment, you might consider some immune tonics. In general, you do not want to use immune tonic herbs when you are sick: instead use them to strengthen and support the immune system before you catch that bug. Once you are sick, switch your tactics, and your herbs. Most of these herbs can be used as capsules, teas or tinctures. *(number in brackets refer to the references in the back of the book for more information on these herbs)*

Herbs for the Immune System

Immune tonics strengthen and support immune function:

- Astragalus (*Astragalus membranaceus*) (14, 15, 17, 77, 78, 79)
- Reishi (*Ganoderma lucidum*) (43, 68, 80)
- Shitake (*Lentinula edodes*) (52, 65, 70, 79)
- Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*)
- Cordyceps (*Cordyceps sinensis*) (31, 37, 42, 75, 84, 85)
- Holy Basil (*Ocimum sanctum*) (39, 44, 59, 62)

Demulcents coat and soothe irritated or inflamed membranes to allow healing to begin:

- Marshmallow (*Althea officinalis*)
- Slippery Elm (*Ulmus fulva* or *U. rubra*) note: use cultivated only
- Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra* or *G. uralensis*)
- Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*)

Adaptogens help the body, particularly the sympathetic nervous system, adapt to stress and maintain balance. Many adaptogens also support healthy immune function:

- Eleuthero (*Eleutherococcus senticosus*) (25, 28, 29)
- Rhodiola (*Rhodiola rosea*) (2, 48, 63)
- Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra* or *G. uralensis*) (5, 67, 72, 86)
- Holy Basil (*Ocimum sanctum*) (4, 12, 30, 49, 56)
- Devil's Club (*Oplopanax horridum*)
- Schisandra (*Schisandra chinensis*) (16, 40, 55)

Nutrients for Immune Function

Vitamin C

Considered to be one of the safest and most effective nutrients known, its benefits range from immune system defense (19, 22, 57) to protect from heart disease, and one recent study noted that higher blood levels of vitamin C might be the ideal indicator for a person's overall health. An average dose is 500 mg daily, in addition to your daily servings of organic fruits and veggies. Vitamin C is a water-soluble vitamin, so the body does not store it. For this reason, it is important to take small frequent doses. I recommend using a supplement that contains both Vitamin C and flavonoids, as they are best absorbed together. When we are under stress from life, such as overwork or illness, our bodies need higher doses of vitamin C.

Foods High in Vitamin C:

- Hot peppers and bell peppers
- Fresh herbs including cilantro, chives, thyme, basil and parsley

- Dark leafy green vegetables such as kale, mustard greens, turnip greens, watercress, chard and spinach
- Cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts
- Yams
- Fruits including kiwi, papaya, oranges, strawberries, cantaloupe and guavas

Vitamin D3

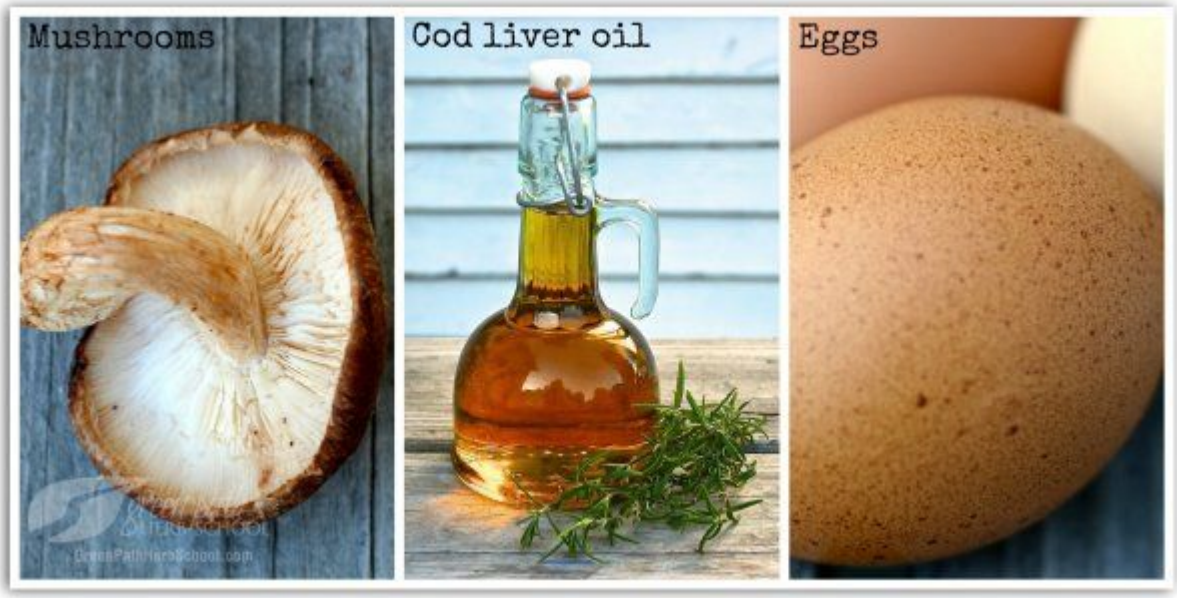
Technically not a “vitamin,” Vitamin D3, also called cholecalciferol, is actually a secosteroid hormone, and its role in immune health is proven (3, 32, 81). Winter is the time of the year when many of us should be supplementing our Vitamin D3, especially if you live in a northern climate. How much Vitamin D3 should one take? It really depends. The Vitamin D Council recommends the following:

"Healthy children under the age of 1 year should take 1,000 IU vitamin D3 per day–over the age of one, 1,000 IU vitamin D3 per every 25 pounds of body weight per day. Well adults and adolescents should take 5,000 IU vitamin D3 per day. You can have a 25-hydroxyvitamin D3 blood test to see where your levels are (32)."

It is impossible to get adequate Vitamin D3 levels from food. Exposing our skin to sunshine is a must. The most effective way to do this is without applying sunscreen. Make sure you get out of the sun well before you start to burn. Exposure time can range from 20 minutes or more. The darker your skin tone, the longer exposure time you need. Even then many people may need to supplement with a good D3 vitamin as well.

Foods High in Vitamin D:

- Fatty fish such as herring, salmon, mackerel and sardines
- Egg yolks
- Fortified milks, orange juice and cereals
- Mushrooms
- Cheese
- Beef liver
- Cod liver oil



Zinc

Zinc is an essential trace element that influences growth and affects the development and integrity of the immune system (26, 27, 35, 54, 71). Zinc-deficient persons experience increased susceptibility to a variety of pathogens. It is crucial for normal development and function white blood cells.

Foods High in Zinc:

- Meats such as liver, beef, turkey, and lamb
- Seafood such as crab, scallops, shrimp, and oysters
- Seeds including pumpkin, watermelon, and squash
- Dark chocolate
- Peanuts
- Mushrooms including crimini and shiitake
- Maple syrup
- Vegetables such as spinach, chard, asparagus, and peas

Water

Next to air, water is the most necessary element for human survival. Did you know that a normal adult is 60 to 70 percent water? All of our organs need water in order to function properly and eliminate wastes. The minimum amount of water for a healthy person is eight to ten 8-ounce glasses a day. Make sure to drink more if you are sick or have a fever. The body also uses water to thin overly thick mucus and to moisten mucus membranes, both essential for health. Remember, broths and herbal teas count! Choose mineral-rich herbs such as nettles, red clover, peppermint, chamomile, alfalfa, spearmint and raspberry to support electrolyte balance.

Getting Ready for the Cold and Flu Season

Although Echinacea and Goldenseal may be the first herbs you think about when catching a cold, there are many herbs that are useful for the different stages of a cold or flu.

Herbs and nutrients for the prevention or onset of a cold are best used at the first signs of illness or if you have been exposed to someone who is sick. Larger doses of Echinacea are best to help the immune system fight off a cold before it sets in (7, 14, 18, 21, 45, 50, 64, 74).

If you have been exposed:

- Echinacea (*E. purpurea* or *E. angustifolia*) (smaller doses or mixed with other herbs) note: use organically cultivated only as wild Echinacea is threatened by overharvesting
- Western Red Cedar (*Thuja plicata*)
- Balsam Root (*Balsamorhiza sagittata*)
- Zinc
- Vitamin C
- Vitamin D3

If you know you've got IT, it's time to try some herbs for cold and flu. Herbs can be excellent at relieving symptoms and helping the body to process and eliminate wastes. Remember, there is no substitute for getting the rest you need to help your body recover quickly and completely!

Herbs for cold and flu:

- Elder (*Sambucus spp.*)
- Boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*)
- Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra* or *G. uralensis*)
- Lomatium (*Lomatium dissectum*)
- Osha (*Ligusticum porterii*)
- Echinacea (*E. purpurea* or *E. angustifolia*) (smaller doses or mixed with other herbs) note: use organically cultivated only as wild Echinacea is threatened by overharvesting
- Garlic (*Allium sativum*)
- Goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*) note: use organically cultivated only as Goldenseal is almost gone from the wild

In addition, you can pick and choose from herbs in the categories below based on your symptoms.

If there is a sign of infection present such as fever or dark yellow or green mucus, you might try antimicrobial herbs:

- Goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*) note: use organically cultivated only as Goldenseal is almost gone from the wild
- Western Red Cedar (*Thuja plicata*) (36)
- Oregon Grape Root (*Berberis* or *Mahonia spp.*)
- Echinacea (*E. purpurea* or *E. angustifoia*) (13, 73) note: use organically cultivated only as wild Echinacea is threatened by overharvesting
- Baptisia (*Baptisia tinctoria*)
- Myrrh (*Commiphora spp.*) (20, 53, 60, 61)
- Balsam Root (*Balsamorhiza sagittata*)
- Garlic (*Allium sativum*)
- Usnea (*Usnea spp.*)

If there is respiratory involvement, such as coughing, wheezing, or sore throat, consider some herbs for the respiratory system:

- Balsam Root (*Balsamorhiza sagittata*)
- Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon spp.*)
- Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*)
- Grindelia (*Grindelia spp.*)
- Horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*)

- Pleurisy Root (*Asclepias tuberosa*)
- Lobelia (*Lobelia inflata*)
- Elecampane (*Inula helenium*)
- Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra* or *G. uralensis*)
- Osha (*Ligusticum porterii*)
- Spikenard (*Aralia racemosa* and *A. californica*)
- Marshmallow (*Althea officinalis*)
- Wild Cherry or Choke Cherry (*Prunus spp*.)

Herbs for the sinuses can help with inflammation, congestion and infection:

- Stone Root (*Collonsonia canadensis*)
- Yerba Santa (*Eriodictyon spp*.)
- Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*)
- Horseradish (*Armoracia rusticana*)
- Oregon Grape Root (*Berberis or Mahonia spp*.)
- Goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*) note: use organically cultivated only as Goldenseal is almost gone from the wild
- Usnea (*Usnea spp*.)
- Myrrh (*Commiphora spp.*)
- Marshmallow (*Althea officinalis*)
- Baptisia (*Baptisia tinctoria*) (6, 10, 11)

Eucalyptus essential oil can be inhaled as a steam for infection. It is also helpful to irrigate the nasal passages with a neti pot. Using a neti pot with a warm saline or herbal solution can help to reduce infection, mucus accumulation, and congestion.

If the lymph glands are swollen:

- Red Root (*Ceanothus spp*.)
- Cleavers (*Galium aparine*)
- Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*)
- Burdock (*Arctium spp*.)

Calendula
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Burdock
Red Root

Natural Protocol for Respiratory Health

The lungs have an amazing capacity to heal themselves and recover from respiratory stress including cigarette smoke, bronchitis, and air pollution or breathing heavy particulates such as exposure to forest fires. Whether you have short-term stress like a cold, or long-term stress, such as asthma, there is a lot you can do to naturally support your respiratory system. I find using a combination of external treatments and internal remedies to be the most effective.

External Treatments:

Neti Pots: A Tea Pot for your Nose

Does the idea of putting water up your nose on purpose sound crazy? It is actually an amazing way to keep the sinuses in top condition! And remember, your sinuses are the gateway to your lungs and respiratory system. Using a neti pot is an excellent way to clear congestion and pressure in the sinuses. Using a neti pot with a warm saline or herbal solution is useful for sinus infections, mucus accumulation, colds and flu, chronic congestion, particulate in the air, allergies, hay fever, some sore throats, and even ear infections.

How to Use a Neti Pot:

1. Fill the neti pot with 1 cup warm water (filtered or boiled) or herbal tea. You want it to be about as warm at the water you would use to take a shower.
2. Add 1/4 teaspoon sea salt, Celtic salt, rock salt, or kosher salt (NOT table salt) and stir until dissolved.
3. Adding 20–60 drops of an herbal extract such as goldenseal or Oregon grape root can be very helpful for fighting off a sinus infection.
4. Aloe vera juice or marshmallow tea can be added to soothe irritated mucus membranes
5. Bend over the sink and tilt your head to one side, placing the spout of the neti pot in the upper nostril, letting the water run out the lower nostril.
6. After using half of the pot, repeat on the other side.
7. This process can be done 1–2 times a day.

Essential Oils:

Essential oils evaporate easily, penetrate deeply and can be especially effective for treating the respiratory system. Many essential oils are antimicrobial and can help fight off a bacterial or viral infection. They are wonderful for congestion and are superb for cleaning the air. Essential oils are easily used by steam inhalation, in an aromatherapy diffuser, as a room spray, in a humidifier, as a vapor balm, in a chest poultice, or even as a gargle. You can put a few drops on a cotton ball and carry it in a plastic bag to sniff as needed. Essential oils can be rubbed on the bottom of the feet to treat the lungs and lower respiratory system. Different oils are listed below with their herbal counterparts for their specific actions on the respiratory system.

Respiratory Treatments

The herbs listed below can be used internally as teas, capsules, or tinctures, depending on the plant. The below essential oils should generally be used as external treatments. See the above information on essential oils for details on their use.

Expectorants

Expectorants help the body produce mucus more effectively. This helps protect the respiratory system from foreign particulate, as well as viruses and bacteria. Expectorants can be useful to help move foreign particles up and out of the lungs. They can also thin mucus that is too thick to help “flush” out the respiratory system.

Expectorant Herbs:

- Elecampane (*Inula helenium*)
- Grindelia (*Grindelia spp.*)
- Balsamroot (*Balsamorhiza sagittata*)
- Poplar Bud (*Populus spp.*)
- Horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*)
- Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*)

Expectorant Essential Oils:

- Basil (*Ocimum basilicum*)
- Benzoin (*Styrax benzoin*)
- Bergamot (*Citrus bergamia*)
- Cedar (*Cedrus atlantica*)
- Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus and E. radiata*)
- Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*)
- Hyssop (*Hyssopus officinalis)*
- Marjoram (*Origanum marjorana*)
- Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*)
- Sandalwood (*Santalum album*) note: use cultivated only

- Myrrh (*Commiphora myrrha*)

Decongestants

Excessive mucus can cause congestion as well as creating an environment ripe with the possibility of an opportunistic infection. Decongestants help ease nighttime breathing allowing for a deeper sleep, which is so important when one is sick.

Decongestant Herbs:

- Mormon tea (*Ephedra viridis*)

- Yerba Santa (*Eriodyctyon spp*.)
- Nettles (*Urtica spp*.)
- Horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*)

Decongestant Essential Oils:

- Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)
- Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus* and *E. radiata*)
- Fir (*Abies spp*.)
- Tea Tree (*Melaleuca alternifolia*)
- Lavender (*Lavendula officinalis* and *L. latifolia*)
- Peppermint (Mentha piperita)
- Ravintsara (*Cinnamomum camphora*)

Demulcents

One of the first lines of immune defense for the body is the mucus membranes. Demulcents help to coat and soothe irritated or inflamed mucus membranes and restore these tissues back to healthy function. This allows healing to begin.

Demulcent Herbs:

- Marshmallow (*Althea officinalis*)
- Slippery Elm (*Ulmus fulva* or *U. rubra)* note: I prefer to use Marshmallow, as Slippery Elm is overharvested in the wild)
- Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra* or *G. uralensis*)
- Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*)

Anti-tussives

Both sneezing and coughing are protective reactions that the body uses to get foreign particulate up and out of the respiratory system. Generally they should be encouraged, not suppressed. Sometimes, however, a cough can be dry and unproductive and serves only to irritate and inflame the lower respiratory system. This can be particularly distressing at night when you are trying to sleep. Most herbs will not suppress a cough, but will soothe and reduce irritation to the lungs.

Anti-tussive Herbs:

- Pleurisy (*Asclepias tuberosa*)
- Horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*)
- Wild Cherry or Choke Cherry (*Prunus spp*.)
- Marshmallow (*Althea officinalis*)
- Elecampane *(Inula helenium*)

Anti-tussive Essential Oils:

- Anise (*Pimpinella anisum*)
- Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus* and *E. radiata*)
- Fir (*Abies spp*.)
- Marjoram (*Origanum majorana*)
- Myrrh (*Commiphora myrrha*)
- Balsam of Peru (*Myroxylon pereirae*)
- Frankincense (*Boswellia spp*.)
- Sandalwood (*Santalum album*) note: use cultivated only
- Cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens*)

Anti-Virals

Did you know that viruses cause 90% of respiratory ailments? Most pharmaceutical medications are expensive and only narrowly effective, but herbs and essential oils can help!

Anti-Viral Herbs:

- Lomatium (*Lomatium dissectum*)
- Boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*)
- Osha (*Ligusticum porterii*)
- Hyssop (*Hyssopus officinalis*)
- Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra* or *G. uralensis*)

Anti-Viral Essential Oils:

- Thyme linalool (*Thymus vulgaris L. ct. linalool*)
- Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*)
- Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*)
- Tea Tree (*Melaleuca alternifolia*)
- Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus* and *E. radiata*)
- Bergamot (*Citrus bergamia*)
- Black Pepper (*Piper nigrum*)

- Melissa (*Melissa officinalis*)
- Hyssop (*Hyssopus officinalis*)

Anti-microbials

Once we get a virus, opportunistic microbes can often set in. Therefore, I think it wise to generally start using antimicrobial herbs at the first sign of a cold or flu.

Anti-microbial Herbs:

- Garlic (*Allium sativum*) (1, 9, 82)
- Goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*) (24, 33, 38, 46, 69) note: use cultivated only
- Oregon Grape Root (*Berberis or Mahonia spp.*) (23, 34, 41, 58)
- Balsam root (*Balsamorhiza sagittata*) (47)
- Poplar Bud (*Populus spp.*)
- Usnea (*Usnea spp.*) (8, 76)

Anti-microbial Essential Oils:

Most essential oils are antimicrobial to one or more organisms. These oils are good choices.

- Bergamot (*Citrus bergamia*)
- Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus* and *E. radiata*)
- Juniper (*Juniperus communis*)

Herbal Recipes for a Healthy Fall

Now you have a toolbox of herbs, nutrients and essential oils to use during the cold and flu season, but what do you actually do with these things? Following is a recipe section filled with inspiring and often delicious recipes to help you put those herbs and oils to use! Most of the botanical names for these herbs and oils are listed above, so I have specified botanicals in the recipe only as I felt it was needed. Remember, don't be afraid to get creative. Go ahead and tweak things based on what you have on hand or what you or your family like. This isn't rocket science; this is good old-fashioned kitchen medicine. That is what is so beautiful and profound about herbal medicine: anyone can do it. So feel inspired, get empowered, and make some formulas BEFORE you get that grunge!

Antioxidant Purple Berry Paste

This recipe is delicious and easily passed the taste test of my two little boys. By cooking it longer, you can reduce it even more and end up with a thick paste.
Recipe:

- 2 cups fresh elderberries, or 1 cup dried elderberries
- 1 cup blueberries or huckleberries
- 2 tablespoons water (if using dried elderberries, use 1 cup water)
- 1 tablespoon fresh grated ginger
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon

- 3 whole cloves
- 2 tablespoons raw honey (Caution: Do not use honey for children under 1 year of age. Rice syrup or maple syrup may be substituted.)

Simmer berries, water, ginger, cinnamon and cloves on the stove until the berries have softened and the skins have opened (about 2 hours). Strain the mixture through a strainer, making sure to get all of the pulp (it should be kind of thick). Mix in 2 tablespoons of honey and stir well. Store in the refrigerator.

How to Use It:

- For adults, 1 tablespoon a day of this delectable treat will give you a powerful does of antioxidants as well as being a useful antiviral—a wonderful combination for the coming winter!
- For children, use 1 teaspoon a day.

Fresh Horseradish Sauce

This is an easy and delicious recipe that you can prepare in the fall and use throughout the winter months. Horseradish is also easy to grow or you can get your roots at the local health food store or farmers market. Native to southeastern Europe, horseradish has a long history of use as a circulatory stimulant, diaphoretic, diuretic, antibiotic, and for easing joint pain. It is also used for supportive treatment of urinary tract infections as well as for treatment of respiratory infections such as acute bronchitis, colds, sore throat, and sinusitis. It doesn't take much to notice its effect: believe me, this recipe will definitely clear your sinuses! It is a wonderful herb, food,

and condiment.

Recipe:

- Peel and dice your horseradish roots (I used 2 nice sized roots and ended up with 2 1/2 cups)
- Add 1/2 cup water per cup horseradish
- Blend until the root is chopped fine
- Add 1/2 teaspoon Celtic sea salt (or any whole salt) per cup horseradish
- Add 3 teaspoons fresh squeezed lemon juice per cup horseradish

Adding the lemon juice right after blending will give you a milder result. For a hotter condiment, wait about three eye-watering minutes before adding your lemon juice. Store it in a glass jar with a tight fitting lid. Your horseradish can then be refrigerated and will last about 6 months or freeze for later use.

How to Use It:

- Add a tablespoon to hot soup.
- Spread some on a cracker.
- Use it as a condiment with meats or savory dishes.
- Mix it into a salad dressing.
- Mix it in a cup of hot water with a teaspoon of honey and a lemon wedge.

Chicken Noodle Immune Soup:

Here is a new twist on an old favorite: chicken noodle soup. Made with rice noodles, this recipe is gluten free and packed with herbs and foods that nourish the immune system. Great if you're fighting off a cold or flu, or anytime you want a delicious bowl of comfort—whether for the body or soul.

Recipe:

- 8 cups chicken broth
- 1–2 large chicken breasts or 2–3 chicken thighs, chopped small
- **In a small muslin bag:**

    - 2 astragalus roots (.3 0z.)
    - 2–3 slices reishi mushroom (.2 oz.)
    - 1 stalk fresh lemongrass (.2 oz. dried)
    - 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 cup dried nettles
- 1 thumb-sized piece of fresh ginger, grated
- 2 carrots, sliced
- 1 onion, minced
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup fresh lime juice
- 4 medium shiitake mushrooms, sliced thin
- 2–3 tablespoons fish sauce (to taste)
- 1 can whole coconut milk
- 4 handfuls de-stemmed spinach or 4 cups coarsely chopped watercress
- 8-10 oz. dry, flat rice noodles (I use Thai Kitchen)

How to Make It:

1. Using a large soup pot, bring chicken stock to a boil over high heat, adding the muslin bag of herbs.
2. Add the chicken, nettles, ginger, carrots, and onion. Boil on high for 1 minute, and then turn heat down to medium and cover with a lid. Allow soup to simmer for 5—6 more minutes.
3. Meanwhile, bring a large pot of water to a boil and add the noodles. Remove from heat and allow noodles to soak 5—8 minutes, or until soft but still chewy ("al dente"). Drain and rinse briefly with cold water to keep from sticking.
4. While continuing to simmer the soup, add the cayenne, garlic, lime juice, shiitake mushrooms, and fish sauce. Stir well. Remove the muslin bag of herbs.
5. Turn heat down to minimum and add the coconut milk and greens. Simmer for 1 minute and stir well.
6. To serve, place a generous mound of noodles in each bowl, top with the hot soup, and enjoy!

Elderberry Syrup

Here is my recipe to make your own elderberry syrup: a delicious and effective winter remedy.

Recipe:

- 2 cups fresh elderberries (or 1 cup dry elderberries)
- 4 cups water (add 1 extra cup of water if using dried elderberries)
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 2 tablespoons fresh grated ginger
- 4 star anise

- ½ teaspoon cardamom
- 6 clove buds
- 2 cups honey (Caution: Do not use honey for children under 1 year of age. Rice syrup or maple syrup may be substituted.)

How to Make It:
Add elderberries, water, cinnamon sticks, grated ginger, star anise, cardamom and clove buds to 4 cups water. Bring to a boil and then simmer for about 20 minutes until the water is reduced to 2 cups. Strain and mix in honey. You can store this syrup in the refrigerator, or preserve it by putting it in a canning jar in a hot water bath for 10 minutes. Tip: freeze fresh elderberries before taking them off the stems to make removal easier.

Elderberries contain large amounts of potassium and beta-carotene, as well as sugar and fruit acids, calcium, phosphorous, vitamin C, and bioflavonoids, including rutin and quercitrin. They also contain a high concentration of anthocyanins. Anthocyanins, derived from the purple pigments, have many medicinal properties. Ongoing research in Europe on the anthocyanins found in the elderberry has shown them to exhibit antioxidant activity, immunostimulant properties, anti-viral activity (51, 66, 83), cardiovascular protection, and even stress relief activity. Elderberries are also anti-inflammatory. They can be used for cold and flu, laryngitis, hay fever, sinusitis, rheumatism, sciatica, neuralgia and arthritis. The berries are also used in making elderberry wine and elderberry jam, while the flowers are used as flavoring in Sambuca liqueur or elderflower wine. Both berries and flowers make a lovely tea.

Caution: The stems, roots, unripe berries, and seeds of Elderberries may contain cyanide, and could cause vomiting and severe diarrhea if chewed or eaten uncooked. Cooking, baking or drying the berries makes them safe to consume.

How to Use It:

As a preventative: Adults: 1 tablespoon per day, Children: 1 teaspoon per day. Caution: do not use honey with children under 1 year of age.

When sick: Adults: 1 tablespoon per hour, Children: 1 teaspoon per hour. Caution: do not use honey with children under 1 year of age.

Warming Winter Tea

This is an excellent tea for warming the body and aiding in circulation and digestion. This blend can be a used regularly throughout the fall and winter months.

Recipe:

- 4 parts burdock root
- 1 part licorice root
- 1 part nettles
- 1/2 part cinnamon
- 1/2 part ginger
- 1/2 part rosemary

Add all the herbs together in a large bowl and mix well. Store in a glass jar with a tight-fitting lid. Dried herbs and teas should be stored in a cool, dark area away from sunlight, such as a kitchen cabinet.

How to Use It:

- Combine 1 tablespoon of herbs with 1 cup of water.
- Simmer the herbs on the stove for 15 minutes. Do not boil.
- Strain and drink as desired, up to 3—4 cups a day.

Diaphoretic Tea: It Makes You Sweat!

This recipe can be used for a fever or to help eliminate wastes through the skin. It is useful during a cold or flu or any time you want to get metabolites and wastes out of the body quickly such as with hives, rashes or after food poisoning.

Recipe:

- 2 parts peppermint
- 2 parts elder flower
- 1/2 part yarrow
- 1/2 part boneset

- ½ part spearmint
- ½ part ginger

Add all the herbs together in a large bowl and mix well. Store in a glass jar with a tight-fitting lid. Dried herbs and teas should be stored in a cool, dark area away from sunlight, such as a kitchen cabinet.

How to Use It:

- Pour 2 cups of boiling water over the 2 tablespoons of the loose herbs and steep for 1/2 to 2 hours.
- Strain the herbs from the tea and add honey if desired.
- Drink hot as needed. If you don’t like the bitter taste, leave the yarrow out.
- Drink it sitting under a pile of blankets while reading a good book.
- Drink it in the bathtub. Be careful when you stand up, as you may be light headed.
- Add it to your bath water. This is a great way to use this recipe for children

Immune Support Tea

This blend can be used regularly throughout the fall and winter months to strengthen and support the immune system. This is a tea to use when you are well. If you start to catch something, switch to another blend such as the Diaphoretic Tea.

Recipe:

- 1 part astragalus
- 1 part eleuthero
- 1 part red root
- 1/2 part ginger (fresh or dried)

- 1/2 part licorice

Add all the herbs together in a large bowl and mix well. Store in a glass jar with a tight-fitting lid. Dried herbs and teas should be stored in a cool, dark area away from sunlight, such as a kitchen cabinet.

How to Use It:

- Take 1 ounce of the tea blend (by weight and put it in a canning jar or French coffee press.
- Add 32 ounces of boiling water and let the mixture steep for ½ to 2 hours.
- Strain and drink 1-3 cups per day.

Topical Treatments for Fall Wellness

The following formulas can be used topically to aid recovery and reduce uncomfortable symptoms of cold, flu, and other wintertime aliments. Some of these formulas, such as thieves oil, and mustard and onion packs have been around for a long time. The rest I have developed myself. I encourage making a few of these blends in preparation for the upcoming season. It is no fun to have to make herbal formulas when you are sick. Here's to a healthy and beautiful fall for you and yours!

Immune Booster Essential Oil Blend

Recipe:
Mix the following essential oils in a dark glass bottle with a tight fitting lid

- 1 drop *Eucalyptus radiata*
- 1 drop niaouli
- 2 drops tea tree
- 2 drops *ravintsara*
- 3 drops *Thyme linalool*
- 3 drops bergamot

How to Use It:

- This blend is for external use only.
- Use as a body oil by mixing 12 drops of the Immune Booster Essential Oil Blend per 1 ounce of a fixed oil such as jojoba, almond or grape seed oil.
- Add 12 drops, mixed in a tablespoon of bath salts, milk or yogurt, to a soothing bath for a cold or flu.
- Inhale directly through a tissue or used in an aromatherapy diffuser to “clean the air” if you are exposed to someone coughing or sneezing.
- You can do an intensive treatment once a week in the shower. Simply get wet and then turn the shower off. Rub a small amount of the oil blend all over your body and wait for 20 seconds before showering off.

Thieves Oil

Thieves Oil is an ancient blend of herbs. According to the story, during the Plague of the 15th century, four thieves were captured in Marseilles, France, and charged with robbing the dead and dying victims of the plague. At the trial, the magistrate offered them leniency if they would reveal how they managed to avoid contracting the dreaded infection, in spite of their close contact with infected corpses. It was disclosed that these thieves were perfumers and spice traders who had rubbed themselves with a concoction of aromatic herbs. This is one recipe for the essential oil blend.

Recipe:

Mix equal parts of the following essential oils in a dark glass bottle with a tight-fitting lid:

- *Eucalyptus radiate*
- rosemary
- cinnamon
- clove
- lemon

How to Use It:

- This blend can be inhaled directly through a cotton ball.
- Use in an aromatherapy diffuser if you are exposed to someone who is sick.
- Add several drops to a humidifier to help purify the air.

Decongest Aromatherapy Blend

Use the following essential oil blend to clear out your lungs and purify the air in your house or work environment. It is especially useful to reduce congestion in order to breathe easier through the night.

Recipe:

Mix the following essential oils in a dark glass bottle with a tight fitting lid

- 1 ml (30 drops) *Eucalyptus globulus*
- 1 ml (30 drops) tea tree
- 1 ml (30 drops) peppermint
- 10 drops thyme linalool

How to Use It:

- Add 3–6 drops of the above blend to an aromatherapy diffuser.
- Sprinkle several drops on your pillow before bed.
- Add 10 drops to 1 ounce of vegetable oil and rub on the chest and back.
- Add 15 drops to 1 tablespoon of yogurt or salt, add this blend to a hot bath, relax, and BREATHE.
- To do a steam, fill a bowl with hot (not boiling) water. Cover your head with a towel as you lean over the bowl. Add 3 drops of the essential oil blend, close your eyes, and breathe deeply through your nose until you can no longer smell the essential oils. Repeat this process three times.

Onion or Mustard Chest Pack

Onion and mustard packs are old-time remedies for congestion, pleurisy and have even been used for pneumonia. They help clear the lungs and aid recovery from a respiratory infection, especially if it is lingering.

Recipe:

- 3–4 small onions
- 1 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 cup cornmeal, flaxseed meal or flour
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil

- cheesecloth or unbleached muslin cloth

How to Make an Onion Pack:

- Chop the onions into small pieces and sauté them in oil until they are translucent but not mushy.
- Pour enough apple cider vinegar into the pan to cover the onions.
- Reduce the heat and add 1 cup of cornmeal, flax seed meal or flour (these help hold the heat in and hold the mixture together).
- Mix well until you have a peanut butter consistency.
- Put the mixture on cheesecloth or muslin and fold it together.

- Rub vegetable oil on the chest to protect it before applying the pack.
- Apply the poultice to the chest, making sure it isn't too hot.
- Put a plastic bag over the top of the poultice and a warm towel or a heating pad over the plastic bag.
- Relax and breathe deeply.
- You can keep the pack on as long as it is warm, but I recommend at least 20 minutes.
- This is also a pack that you can apply to the back or the feet, especially for smaller children.

A Mustard Pack can be made in a similar way. It is important to buy whole mustard seeds and grind them with a mortar and pestle or coffee grinder before using.

- Use 1 part mustard seeds to 4 parts cornmeal, flaxseed meal or flour.
- You can add more flour for a child or if the aroma feels too strong.
- Moisten with tepid water until you have a cream cheese consistency and follow the above directions for the onion pack.
- Make sure you apply vegetable oil on the chest to protect it before applying the pack—mustard and onion packs can irritate the skin.

Cold and Flu Bath

Support your immune system and give your spirits a boost with this healing and refreshing batch of bath salts. Whether you feel like you could be coming down with something, or already have, try this bath for body aches and pains, congestion, exhaustion and mental fatigue.

Recipe:

- Mix in a glass jar with a tight fitting lid. Be careful with glass around the bathtub.
- 1 cup epsom salts
- 10 drops tea tree essential oil
- 10 drops ravintsara essential oil
- 10 drops Eucalyptus essential oil

How to Use It:

Mix the essential oils into the epsom salts and draw your bath. Get in the tub and then add ¼ cup of the salts. Breathe deeply and feel better!

Detox Bath

Sweat it out with this diaphoretic blend! This bath is good for cold or flu, cleanses, after intense exercise, or for sore joints and achy muscles.

Recipe:

Mix in a glass jar with a tight-fitting lid. Be careful with glass around the bathtub.

- 1 oz. yarrow flowers
- 1 oz. ginger root (fresh or dry)
- 1 oz. elder flowers
- 1 oz. thyme leaves

- 2 cups apple cider vinegar

How to Use It:

This recipe is best made ahead of time. Infuse the herbs in the vinegar for 2 weeks to 1 month. Strain and add to a hot bath. If desired, a half a cup of sea salt can also be added at this time. Soak for 20 minutes. Similar herbs may also be drunk as a tea while in the bath, or you can use the Diaphoretic Tea. Be careful when exiting the tub, as you may feel light-headed.

Where Do I Find This Stuff?

Most of the listed ingredients are readily available at your local herb or natural food store. If you can't find local sources, here are some high quality on-line resources that I have found to be reliable. If you purchase products through the links here, a small amount of the proceeds help support Green Path Herb School. I hope these recipes have inspired you. Please get creative, experiment, and have fun!

Mountain Rose Herbs

Want to Learn More?

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HERB SCHOOL

Join Me In The Garden

I took most of the photographs in this eBook in my garden. It is a sacred place to me. It is a place I learn from many medicinal plants: my friends, my teachers. It is a place I share with family, students, friends, neighbors, birds, insects, butterflies, worms, and squirrels. This small bit of earth has given so much to so many.

I invite you to explore my garden with me in my free video series

My Herbal Garden: www.youtube.com/user/greenpathherbschool

green path
MIDDLE SCHOOL

About the Author

Elaine Sheff has been studying medicinal plants since 1987. A Clinical Herbalist, she is a graduate of both the Rocky Mountain Center for Botanical Studies and the Southwest School of Botanical Medicine. Elaine is also a certified instructor of Fertility Awareness and Natural Family Planning, a safe, effective birth control method used to avoid or achieve pregnancy. She has a clinical practice providing herbal consultations for individuals with health concerns. Elaine teaches herb classes throughout the United States and is the co-founder of Meadowsweet Herbs. She is the co-director of Green Path Herb School in Missoula, Montana. You can often find Elaine in her garden, homeschooling her children, or cooking gluten free.

Recommended Resources

Recommended Resources:

Green Path Herb School: greenpathherbschool.com
Meadowsweet Herbs: meadowsweet-herbs.com
Jim McDonald: herbcraft.org
Rosalee de la Forêt: methowvalleyherbs.com
Kiva Rose: bearmedicineherbals.com
Kristine Brown: herbalrootszine.com
Juliet Blankespoor: chestnutherbs.com
7Song: 7Song.com
Todd Caldecott: toddcaldecott.com
United Plant Savers: unitedplantsavers.org
American Herbalist Guild: americanherbalistsguild.com
Henriette Kress: henriettesherbal.com
Paul Bergner: naimh.com
Women's Voices for the Earth: womensvoices.org

Herbs, Seeds and Plants:

zackwoodsherbs.com
moonbranch.com
facebook.com/Michael.Skeeter.Pilarski
horizonherbs.com

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